DEPARTMENT OF
MUSIC

Studio 27
Fine Arts Building

In Recital

Chris Misik, piano

Friday, April 15, 2005 at 5:00 pm

Program

Prelude and Fugue in A Minor, BWV 889 (1738-1742) — Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Piano Sonata in G Minor, Op. 22 (1830-1838) — Robert Schumann (1810-1856)
- So rasch wie möglich
- Andantino: getragen
- Scherzo: Sehr rasch und markiert
- Rondo: Presto

Intermission

Sonata in C Minor, Hob. XVI: 20 (1771) — Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)
- Moderato
- Andante con moto
- Finale: Allegro

Coloquio en la reja, from Goyescas (1909) — Enrique Granados (1867-1916)

This recital is presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Music degree for Mr Misik.

Mr Misik is a recipient of a Beryl Barns Memorial Award (Undergraduate), a Jason Lang Scholarship and a 2003 Speake Gold Medal for Excellence.

Reception to follow in Fine Arts Building 2-8.

Program Notes

Among Johann Sebastian Bach's extensive works for keyboard instruments we find two cycles of 24 Preludes and Fugues in all major and minor keys, titled The Well-Tempered Clavier (BWV 846-869 and BWV 870-893). The Well-Tempered Claver is not only one of Bach's most celebrated compositions, but also one of the most renowned works for keyboard instrument. This is due in part to the fact that each piece has its own unmistakable character, as well as to the consistency and wide range of forms with which Bach implements his chosen artistic concept.

With BWV 889, we enter a world of flamboyant chromatics. The prelude is, with the exception of a half a bar at the end of the first part, strictly in two voices. The bass descends chromatically, with a melody that keeps on breaking off both at the top and bottom, every bar means a new change of hands, the harmonies are complicated and speculative - they stretch the system to its limits. The flow of the fugue seems unbelievably determined and stubborn. In the typical Baroque style, Bach renders the entire tension of musical expression in only four notes - the fifth and third of the tonic chord and the diminished seventh from the subdominant leading tone. And the pauses play a poignant role here, too. The first right at the beginning, the second after the four notes to build up tension before the four notes are more or less repeated at double speed and a vertiginous sequence of thirty-second note runs takes us down into the depths. This fugue is one of Bach's most audacious, intense pieces and anticipates the masters of the romantic character piece. This directional style makes the choice of the pianoforte a very obvious one.

Piano Sonata in G Minor, Op. 22

Schumann's Sonata in G minor (Op.22) was composed over an eight-year period, beginning in 1830 with the second movement (Andantino), which was based on the song, "Im Herbste" (1828). The first and third movements were composed in 1833, and the fourth in 1835. Schumann recomposed the finale late in 1838, at the request of his wife, Clara, who found the original movement technically too difficult.

The first movement, in sonata-allegro form, begins with a driving, frenetic theme that Schumann marked "So rasch wie möglich" ("As fast as possible"); the second theme, in the dominant, is in a simpler chordal style, but its rhythm is syncopated. The movement ends with a coda paradoxically marked Schneller ("Faster"), followed by a return to the first theme marked Noch schneller ("Even faster"). A tender Andantino: is Schumann's injunction for the second movement. Here, though the key is nominally C major, the theme and its development are clad in a chromatic cloak of evocative beauty. The third movement is an extraordinarily short scherzo full of syncopation. The Rondo, which ends the work, was described by Schumann as being "very simple, but entirely in keeping with the first movement."

Sonata in C Minor, Hob. XVI: 20

The great C minor sonata is one of the principle works of the creative period around 1770 which has been labelled Haydn's "Storm and Stress" era because the compositions of these years are quite new in their expressive qualities, showing a marked preference for minor keys and abandoning the lightness of the divertimento-like or galant style, even in matters of compositional technique. Its eloquent, expressive character and refined treatment of ornaments reflects in particular his reaction to the keyboard works of Carl Phillip Emanuel Bach.

The first movement derives its extraordinary impact essentially from Haydn's masterly way of combining the flexibly alternating figures which emerge in the foreground, almost like an improvisation, with a harmonic pattern laid out on a large scale, calculated to create tension, and an intricate network of interrelated intervals and motifs. The last movement starts somewhat more lightly but culminates in an unusually animated development section, interwoven with the recapitulation to form one great climax. For the first time in Haydn's sonatas, the central movement, a singing Andante con moto, which proceeds at a gently walking pace, moves to the submediant key of A flat major.

Coloquio en la reja, from *Goyescas*

For two hundred years, the aristocratic Spanish women painted by Francisco Goya - his majas, with their fans, mantillas, enigmatic smiles, mysterious thoughts, silent promises - have held and fascinated all who have seen them. And, surely, no one responded more poetically to their lure and to the art of Goya than did the Spanish composer and pianist Enrique Granados. Today, Granados is chiefly remembered for his graceful tonadillas, songs which evoke Goya and his majas as much as does the piano music, and "Goyescas," a set of six piano pictures, later expanded into an opera of the same name.

Literally translated, "Goyescas" means "in the manner of Goya, or after goya," and each of its sections attempts to interpret musically a painting by Goya. "Goyescas" is in two books and is subtitled "Los majos enamorados" ("The majos, or gallants, in love"). The second piece of Book 1 is "Coloquio en la reja" ("Dialogue at the window") and is entitled also "Love Duet." It is one of the most tragic in mood of the set. Granados envisioned the left hand part as being guitar which accompanies the "voice" in the right hand. Of "Goyescas," the perceptive English critic Ernest Newman has said, "The music, for all the fervor of its passion, is of classical beauty and composure. The harmony is rich but never experimental. The melodies have new curves, the rhythms new articulations. Informing it all is a new grace, a new pathos, a new melancholy. It is difficult, but so beautifully laid out that it is always playable: one has the voluptuous sense of passing fingers through masses of richly colored jewels...It is piano music of the purest kind."